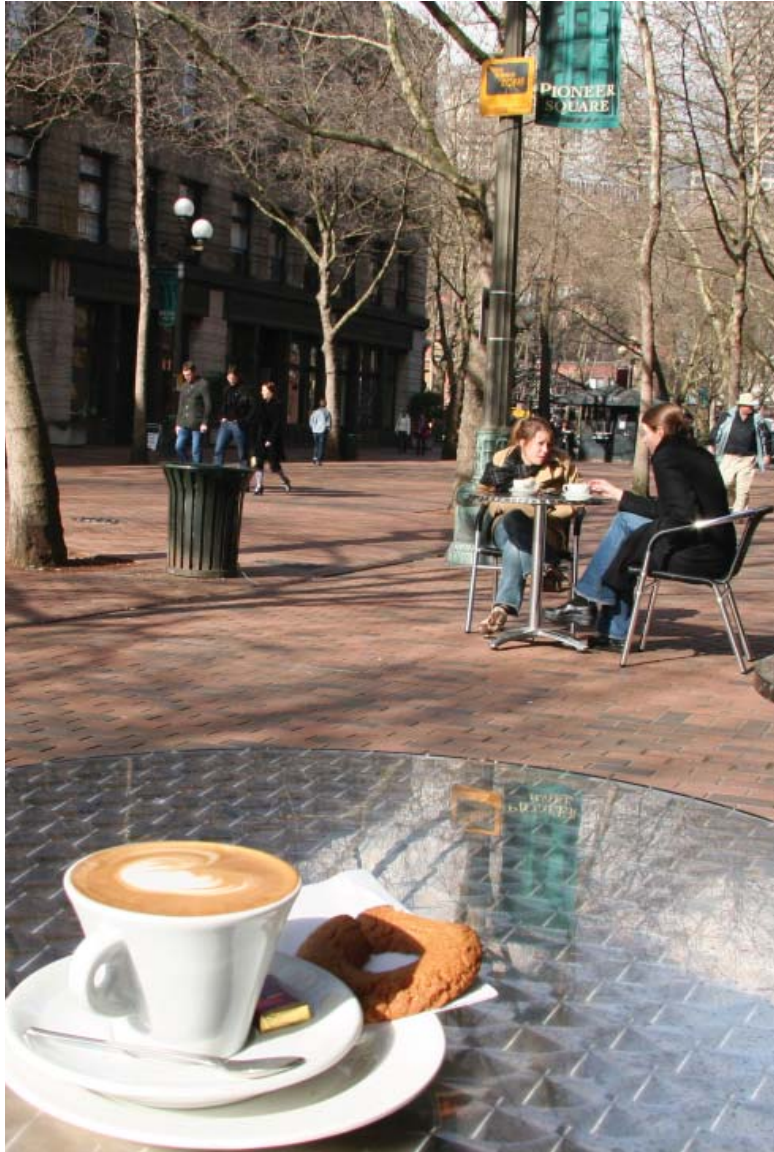


APPENDIX G: SOUTH DOWNTOWN'S PUBLIC REALM



The Livable South Downtown Planning Study was initiated to study potential land use and zoning changes to encourage investment and vitality in South Downtown neighborhoods. No study would be complete without understanding the physical environment, including the size and form of future buildings and the experience of spaces between buildings. Of particular interest are public living areas that will serve people who reside, work and recreate in South Downtown neighborhoods.

Over the years, neighborhoods within South Downtown have been the subject of study by City staff, community members, students and others. Information about many of these studies can be found on the project web site (www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/South_Downtown/Overview/). This appendix presents information about urban design work associated with the Livable South Downtown Planning Study, and includes the following:

- **Identifying challenges and opportunities.** The South Downtown Advisory Group and other community stakeholders were instrumental in identifying challenges and opportunities.
- **Understanding the impact of future buildings.** The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) helped staff and the community to understand the impact of potential building heights and forms, and of building bulk, particularly in areas where future increases in density were contemplated. Images and analysis of height, bulk, scale and shadow impacts of future buildings can be found in the EIS on the project web site. Subsequent analysis was undertaken in Pioneer Square and Chinatown/International District

to facilitate discussion and decision-making by the Special Review Boards.

- **Exploring potential improvements and additions to the public realm.** The City initiated several independent studies in consultation with the community. These studies examined possible opportunities to improve the public experience in South Downtown as the areas grows, particularly where past planning provided less guidance.
- **Create and refine tools to ensure a “livable” environment.** Proposed Land Use Code amendments include the introduction of new tools to help ensure a positive relationship between future development and the street environment, open space amenities that serve future populations, and travel-ways that work together to serve local neighborhoods and the area as a whole.



Challenges and Opportunities in the Public Environment

Assets

South Downtown is home to some of the most intriguing streetscapes and public places in the region, including the ethnic shopping districts of Chinatown/International District and little Saigon, and historic streetscapes throughout Pioneer Square. Following is a list of existing public open space and public facilities in and near South Downtown.

Pioneer Square

- Occidental Park and pedestrian mall
- City Hall Park
- Pioneer Square Park (a.k.a. Pioneer Place)
- Pedestrian plaza north of King Street Station
- Washington Street Boat Landing
- Waterfall Park at 2nd/Main*
- Qwest Field north plaza*, Occidental promenade
- Safeco Field plazas*
- Colman Dock
- Prefontaine Place
- Fortson Square

Chinatown/I.D.

- Kobe Terrace/Danny Woo Gardens
- Hing Hay Park
- International Children’s Park
- Plazas in the Union Station block*
- Lane Street plaza at Uwajimaya*
- Community Center, Library

Nearby outside the study area:

- Yesler Terrace Community Center
- Yesler Terrace playfields (SHA)
- Bailey Gatzert School playfields
- Dr. Jose Rizal Park

(*publicly used spaces that are maintained by private or public entities other than the City of Seattle.)





Challenges

As South Downtown develops, improvements to streetscapes and open spaces will be critical to maintaining a livable environment. Early in the planning process, the community identified needed improvements to South Downtown's streetscapes and public open spaces, including the following:

- Open space in areas planned for increased residential/mixed use density. Several areas of South Downtown, including areas east of Interstate 5, were identified as deficient in open space;
- Pleasant or safer pedestrian routes between neighborhoods, such as east-west travel across 4th Avenue South, under I-5, and south of S. Dearborn Street;
- Open space and improved pedestrian routes along the long blocks east of Interstate 5, particularly as the area develops with a mix of uses;
- A better pedestrian environment near the hub of King Street Station/4th/Jackson intersection where light rail, heavy rail, numerous bus routes and vehicle travel routes converge;
- Sidewalks and adjacent pedestrian-friendly building edges around the stadiums and in the area between the stadium light rail station and the Downtown Urban Center;
- Landscaping and greenspace in many areas of South Downtown; and
- Wider sidewalks along under-developed streets that are likely to have increased pedestrian travel.

Recommendations

Livable South Downtown recommendations include Land Use Code provisions that will facilitate incremental improvements to the public realm in conjunction with future development. These include:

- Open space amenities with bonus development.
Incentive zoning provisions for residential and commercial development include the option of providing public open space in order to exceed limits on floor area or height.
- New Green Streets.
New green streets are proposed in South Downtown. A discussion of green street provisions can be found on page 74. The City is currently working with the community to develop concept designs for green streets within and around the Chinatown/ID core.
- Little Saigon mid-block corridor open space amenity.
Areas east of Interstate 5 were identified as lacking pedestrian amenities and open spaces. In order to provide additional open space as the area develops, the mid-block corridor public amenity option was conceived and will result in the creation of pedestrian-oriented open spaces associated with taller residential buildings. (See page 63).
- Sidewalks and building frontages.
Development along key streets will be required to include sidewalks and building frontages that provide a pedestrian-friendly environment. Key streets include S. Jackson Street and S. Dearborn Street. Projects within Pioneer Square, Chinatown/International District and in

adjacent industrially zoned areas will also be required to provide pedestrian amenities and sidewalks.

- Landscaping in South Downtown.

Plants provide numerous environmental benefits. A green factor landscaping requirement is proposed for all areas of the South Downtown planning area. See page 92 for a discussion of this requirement.

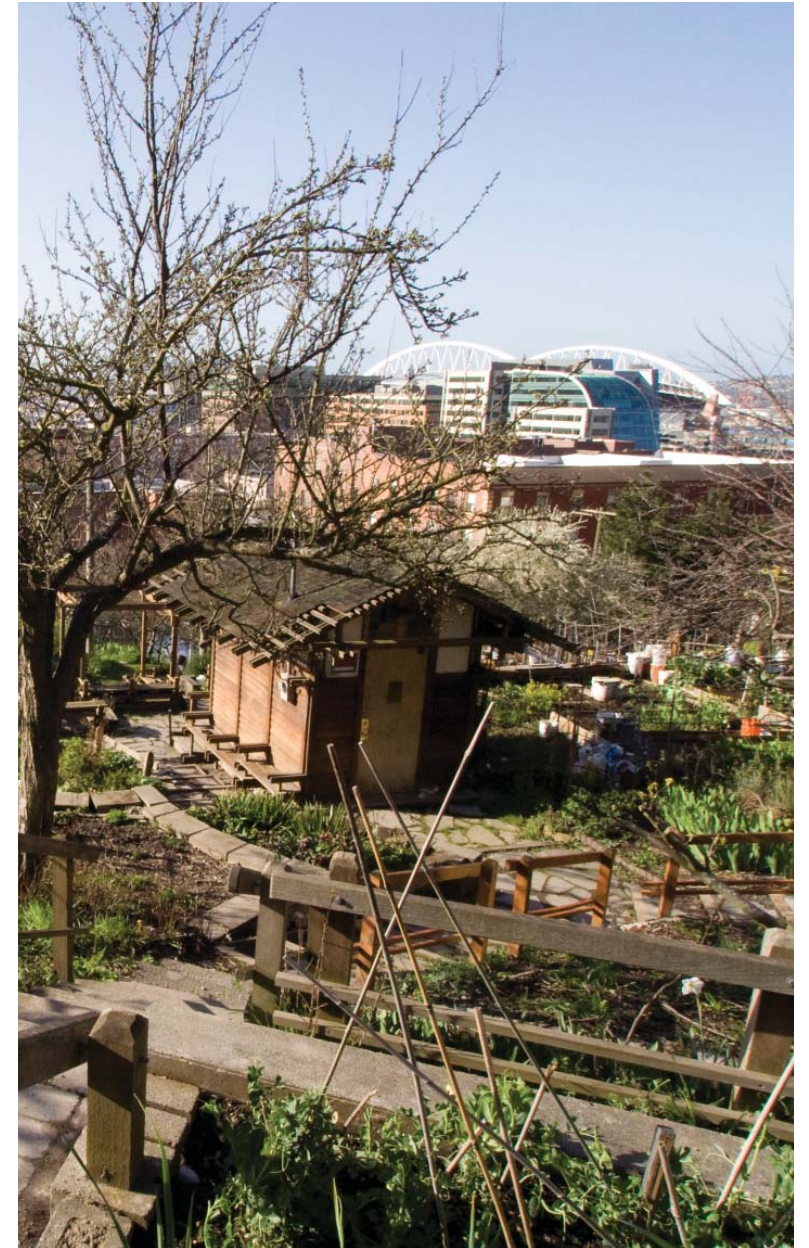
Livable South Downtown Urban Design Studies

Throughout the South Downtown planning process, planners sought the advice and assistance of urban designers to understand opportunities in areas that may benefit from public or private investment. Some of these concepts provided important information that helped to inform proposed Land Use Code amendments.

The recommendations of this study also relied upon several past planning/design efforts including:

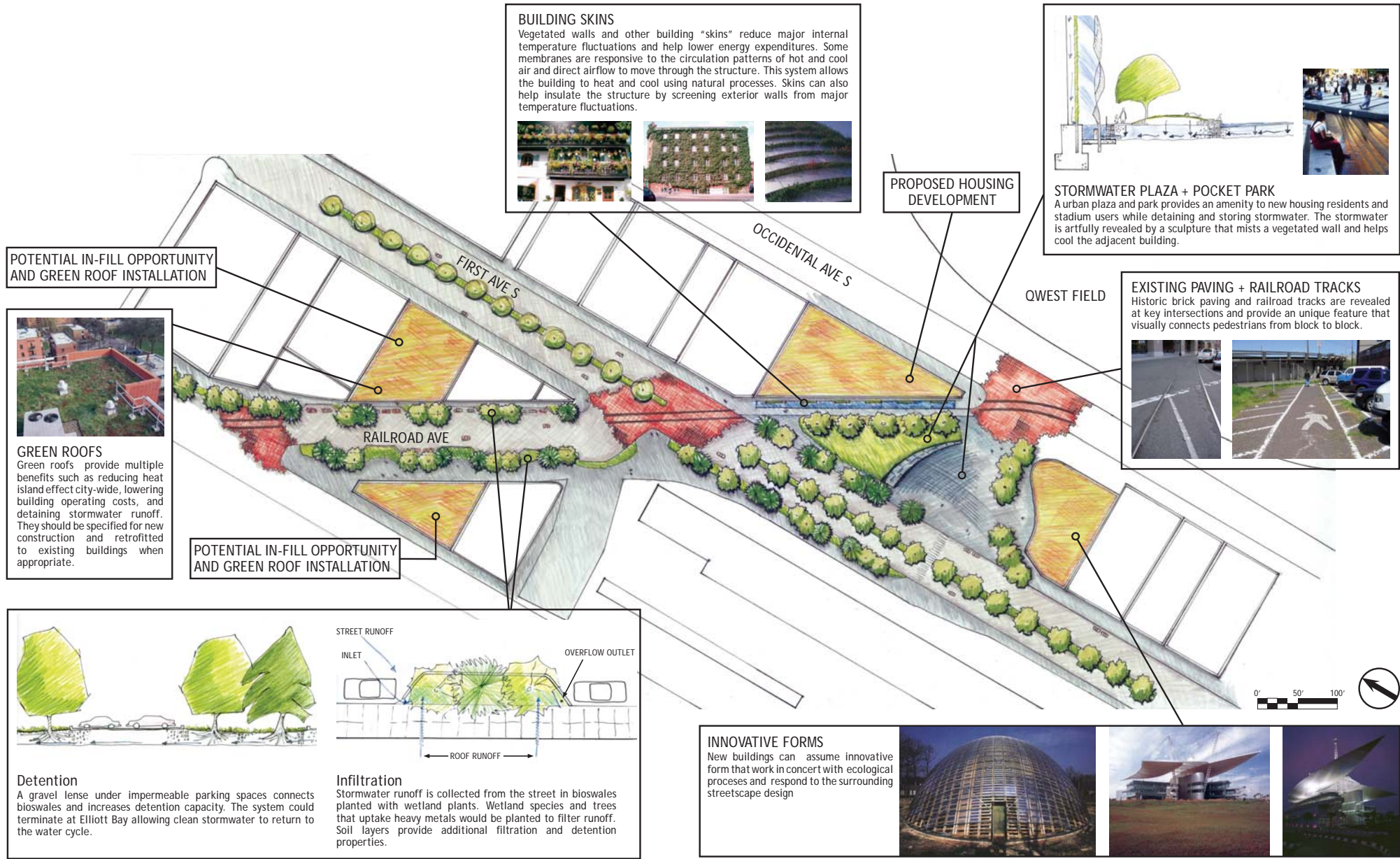
- The Pioneer Square Neighborhood Plan (1998);
- The Chinatown/ International District Strategic (Neighborhood) Plan (1998);
- The Chinatown, Japantown, Little Saigon International District Urban Design Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan (2003, Interlm Community Development;
- Greater Duwamish Manufacturing and Industrial Center Plan (1999); and
- Numerous other plans for Pioneer Square, Downtown, Japantown, Chinatown/International District, and SODO throughout the past several decades.

The following images were derived from concepts that were developed in consultation with the community as part of the Livable South Downtown Planning Study. Further information about the following concepts can be found on the Livable South Downtown Planning Study web site.




Developed by landscape architect Amy Lindemuth, this concept depicts street improvements, open space design, and sustainable drainage features that in combination help provide a pedestrian link between Qwest Field, Pioneer Square and adjacent industrially-zoned land.

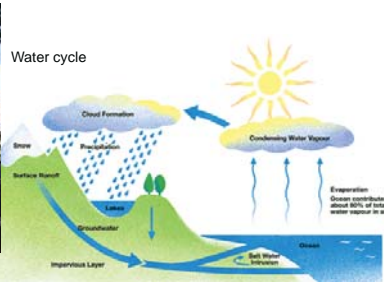
RAILROAD AVENUE - Connecting Colman Dock + the Stadium District



Pioneer Square/ Japantown
The following images were developed by Nakano Associates. They explore the possibility of a street design that links S. Washington Street from the Japantown Hilltop through Pioneer Square to Elliott Bay.



Water cycle



South Washington Street is an east/west street with an elevation change of 60' from Kobe Park to the Coleman Ferry Terminal. There are great views to Mount Rainier and to Elliott Bay. The street runs through the Japantown and Pioneer Square neighborhoods and ends at the Waterfront. There are several vacant lots, primarily in Japantown.

Design Opportunities

- Elevation change provides opportunities for imaginative water expression in ROW
- new nodes/plazas between each neighborhood
- extension of a promenade @ the Ferry Terminal
- connections to Occidental Avenue and 2nd Avenue
- Alley connections

Overall Concept
"Mountains to Sound"-The streetscape along Washington Street represents the flow of water from the mountains to the sound



Water controlled by humans

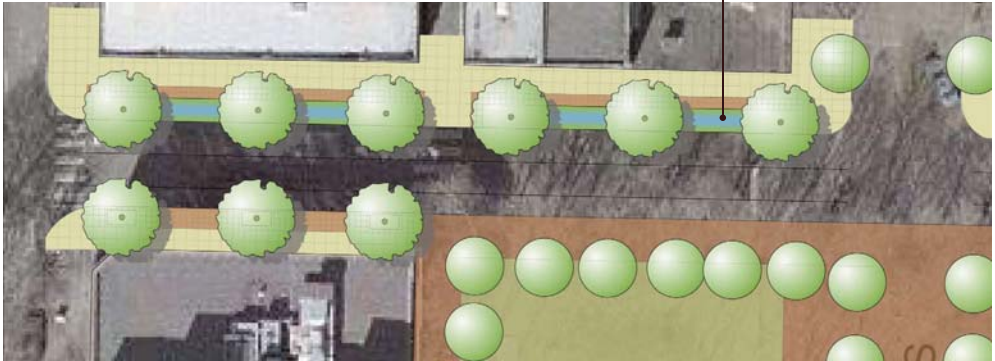
3rd Avenue (half block) to waterfront.
"Flatlands- tidelands" environment. More formal expressions, water tamed by human. S Washington Street might be extended with a new Colman dock , shallow water habitat proposed to the south of this extension. Water flows into the Puget Sound.



Stormwater planter in Portland



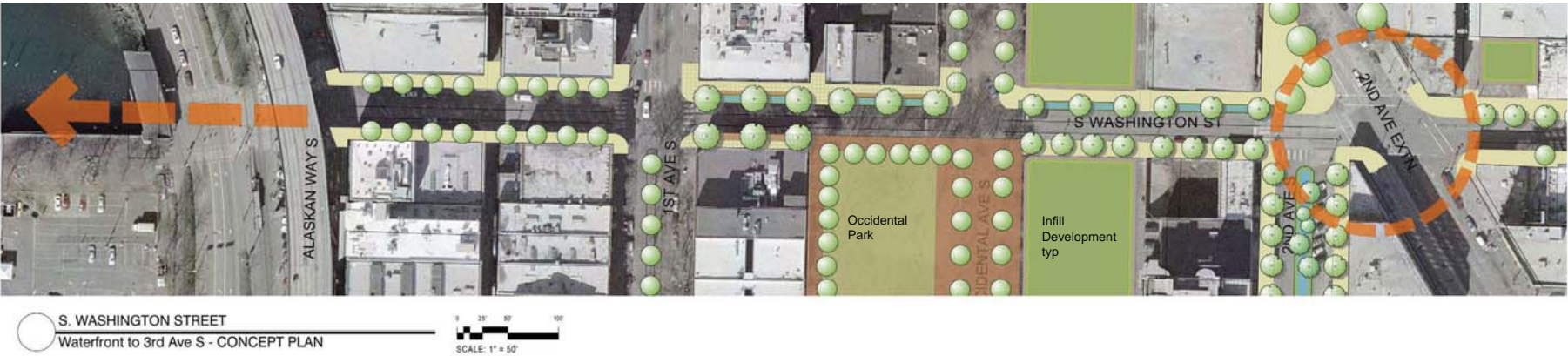
Stormwater planter in Portland



"Flatlands- tidelands" streetscape between 1st Avenue South and Occidental Ave S.

1"=20'

The streetscape along Washington Street represents the flow of water from the mountains to the sound



Sustainability-in South Downtown



S. Washington Street

5th Avenue (half block) to 3rd Avenue (half block)
 "Foothills". The water is moving slower and wider through curving storm-water planters. There is interpretive paving patterns on the sidewalks.



Water as art

Kobe terrace to 5th Avenue(half block on 5th).

"Alpine" environment with a small stream (collecting street and roof run off) along the north side of the street. Boulders (natural/abstract) defines the stream as it moves down the street.
 This concept will mainly be implemented between 6th and 5th Avenue where new construction is likely to take place within the coming years.



Natural water flow



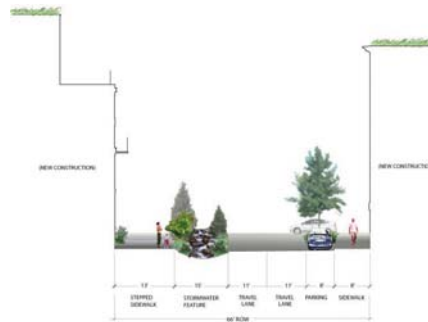
Mossy boulders



S.Washington Street- Existing



S.Washington Street- Proposed



"Alpine" streetscape between S 5th Avenue and S 6th Avenue

1"=20'

The streetscape along Washington Street represents the flow of water from the mountains to the sound



S. WASHINGTON STREET
 3rd Ave S to Kobe Terrace - CONCEPT PLAN

0 25' 50' 100'
 SCALE: 1" = 50'

Occidental Avenue South Green Street

Occidental Avenue South is proposed to be designated as a green street south of S. King Street. This segment of Occidental Avenue South will need to integrate an eclectic mix of uses rather than conform to the design of Occidental Avenue S. within central Pioneer Square.



2nd Avenue/ Pioneer Square
Nakano Associates also explored the possibility of creating drainage features within Pioneer Square that provide environmental benefits, increase pedestrian comfort along 2nd Avenue, and respects historic resources within the neighborhood.

2nd Avenue South -Connecting landmarks
Yesler Way to South King Street

This area contains a number of historic buildings which have been recently renovated as well as several newer buildings with interesting characteristics and vital uses. New development will present opportunities as well as constraints for integrating sustainable materials and practices into the existing fabric of the neighborhood.



Smith Tower



View of 2nd Ave from Smith tower

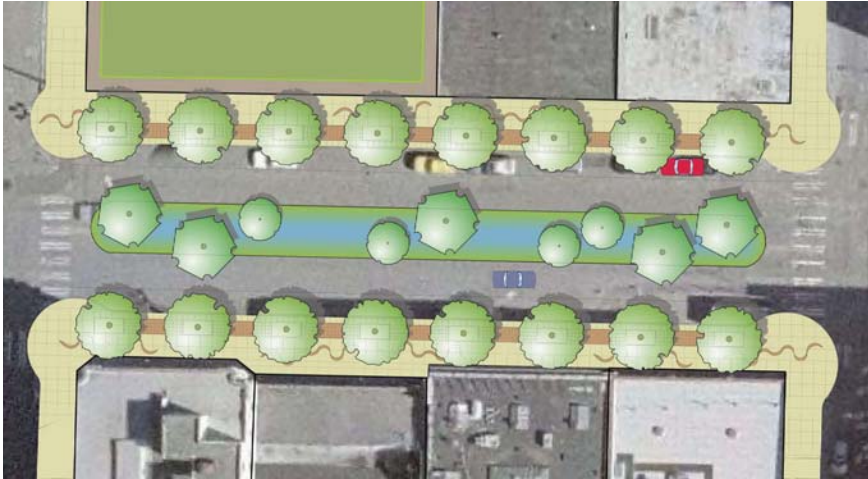
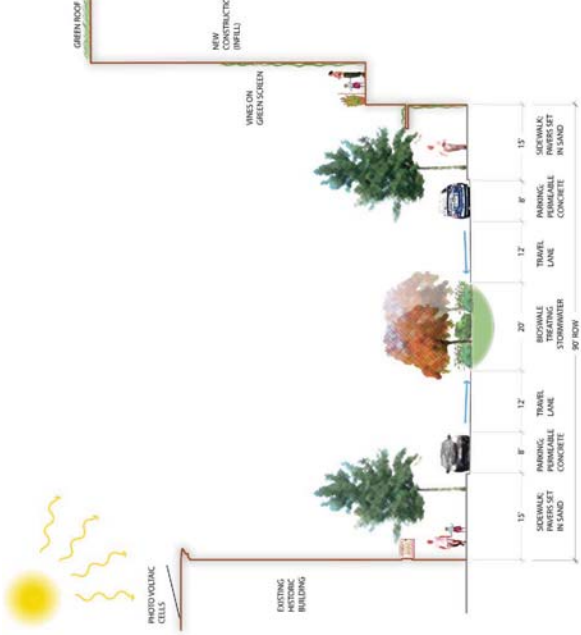


What it could look like



Qwest Field with Artwork

Connecting landmarks



Streetscape between S Main Street and S Jackson Street 1"=20'

A median created down the center of 2nd Avenue could contain bioswales to clean storm runoff that could then be captured and used for landscape irrigation. Alternatively the bioswale could be located along one side of the street to increase opportunities for pedestrian interpretive displays and interaction. Pedestrian and residential green spaces can be maximized in new development and incorporated into existing open space.

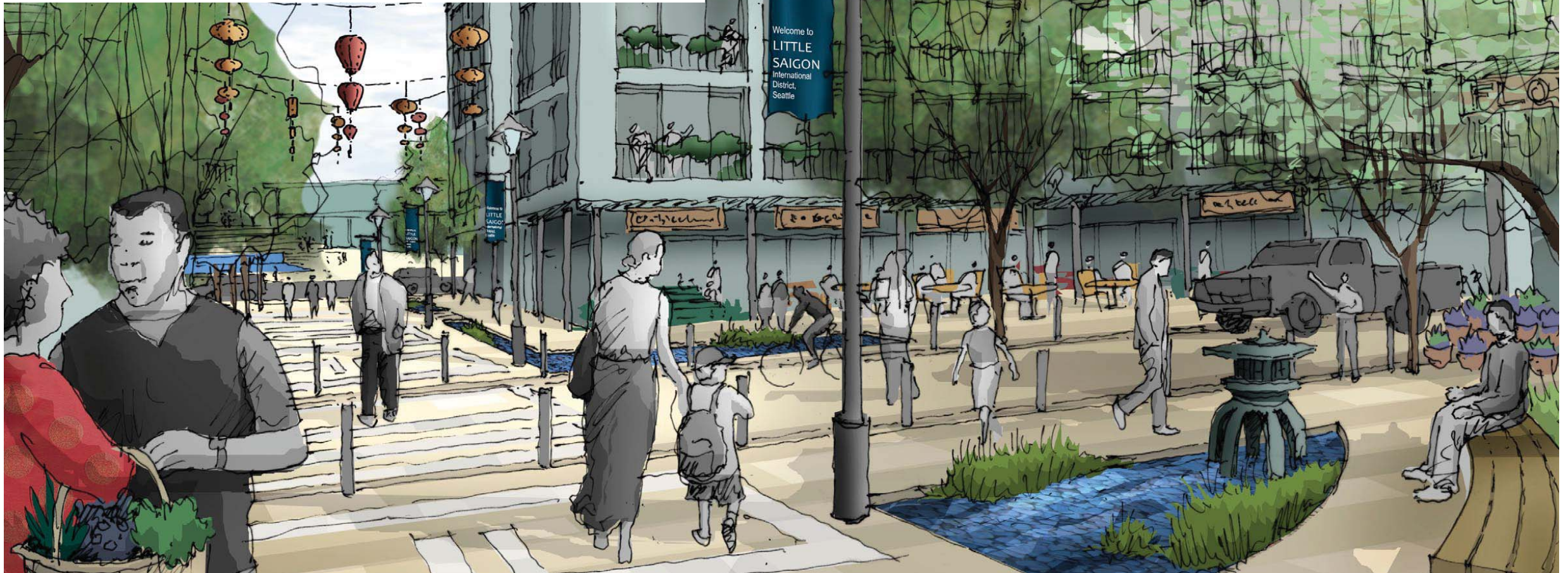
2ND AVE SOUTH
Yesler Way to King Street - CONCEPT PLAN

LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

Little Saigon

The following images depict elements of an urban design study that was commissioned by DPD and developed by Atelier Dreiseitl under contract to DPD. The study was undertaken to develop ideas that could help inform land use decisions, and help promote a future neighborhood landscape that respects existing cultural attributes and uses in an environmentally sustainable context. In their report, Atelier Dreiseitl worked to integrate ideas raised by the community and City planners. The Dreiseitl proposal can be found at: www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/South_Downtown/UrbanDesign/LittleSaigon/.

*Excerpt from Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008*



LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN



This Public Realm Design Study is part of a collection of current works focused on the future development of the unique districts flourishing within Seattle's South Downtown District. Little Saigon, the subject of this study, is one of 6 sub-areas within this overall area. The others include Chinatown, Japantown, Pioneer Square, Stadium Area/1st Avenue and South of Dearborn.

The scope of this study included coordination with concurrent ongoing projects such as the future redevelopment of Goodwill-Dearborn Street and Yesler Terrace, a potential streetcar extension through Little Saigon, South Jackson street design project and other work by the Department of Planning and Development. Considering the overall planning vision, design concepts were developed specifically for the Little Saigon neighborhood.

This design process was undertaken in close collaboration with the DPD as well as Little Saigon community members through a public workshop format, in order to reach visionary and meaningful, but at the same time, feasible landscape solutions that can be realized gradually over time. The design philosophy for the proposed long-term vision is based on a strong public/private partnership. Particularly for Little Saigon, this was seen as a way to bridge the gap between this Vietnamese neighborhood, with its strong cultural traditions and beliefs, and the rest of Seattle. In this relationship, both sides combine to form a Little Saigon that is both rooted in its past and reaching for its future as a vital member of the downtown community.



To do this, project goals responding to community desires and the South Downtown's future planning vision acted as targets for open space concepts. Creating a pedestrian-friendly urban environment is of key importance. Proposed schemes also strengthen the overall Vietnamese-American identity of Little Saigon by providing venues for cultural expression and design details inspired by traditional Vietnamese art and architecture. Lastly, as a way of connecting Little Saigon with its urban and natural surroundings, sustainable design practices, predominantly in the area of stormwater management, are interwoven into the sites urban spaces. Stormwater, flowing visibly through Little Saigon, becomes a primary transition tool between Little Saigon, Seattle and the surrounding natural landscape.

The general framework proposed in this study provides the big ideas that now must be enriched and informed through continued collaboration with the City of Seattle and, in particular, Little Saigon community members. Only with the contribution and endorsement of this group can a new Little Saigon become the true expression of those who live and work in this place.

*Excerpt from Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008*



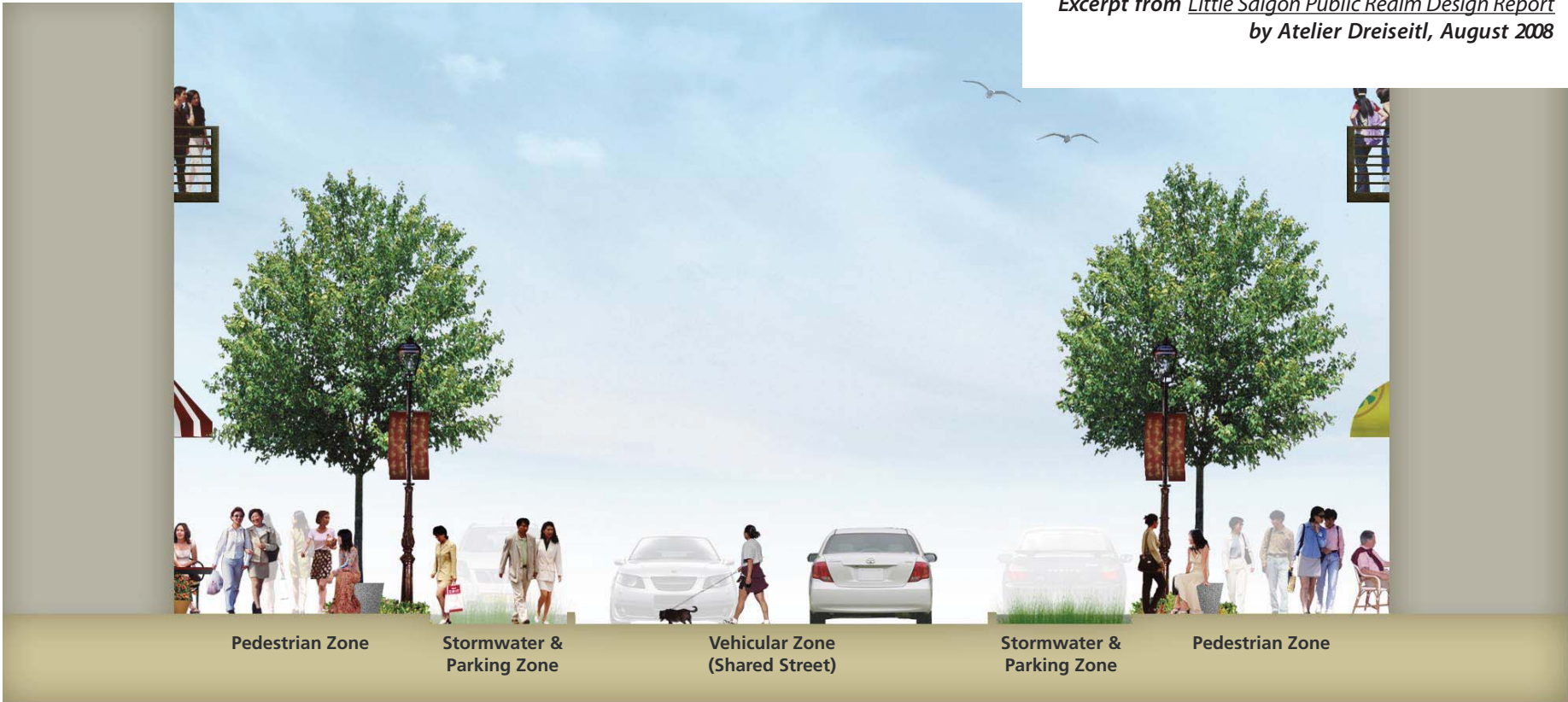
LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

The streetscape is a neighborhood's front yard and says a lot about the community, the people who live there and the history and culture they all share. The street should be full of life and rich in culture and with the right design and detailing it can be a vibrant place that supports a variety of uses and increases cultural identity while maintaining a good ecological balance through careful stormwater planning and landscape design.

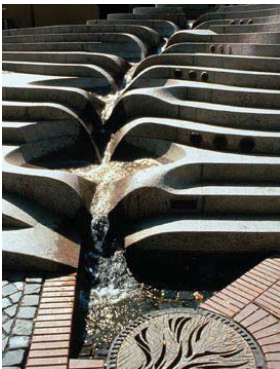
Both S. King and S. Weller Streets have been designated by the City of Seattle to be developed as Green Streets. With a shortage of adequate open space within the boundary of Little Saigon, it is important that the street right-of-ways be used to maximize the amount of open space and create a safe and active pedestrian-scale streetscape. This would also help the economic activity of Little Saigon by creating a welcoming place for both residents and visitors to enjoy the local restaurants, markets and specialty stores that give the neighborhood its unique character.

With enhancing and expanding the public open space and pedestrian circulation as the main objective, both S. King and S. Weller Streets should have a widened sidewalk and eliminate the traditional solid planting strip for tree grates to provide a more versatile and transparent edge between the pedestrian and vehicular zones. This also increases the amount of space that restaurants and markets can spread out into the sidewalk to help further activate the streetscape while maintaining a high-quality environment. Trees should be deciduous and spreading to keep the focus on the street level. Outdoor seating should be used to provide an attractive atmosphere for people to linger. Pedestrian-scale lighting should be used to light the sidewalk and provide a consistent vertical design element with possible incorporated event signage unique to the Little Saigon neighborhood.

Excerpt from *Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report*
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008

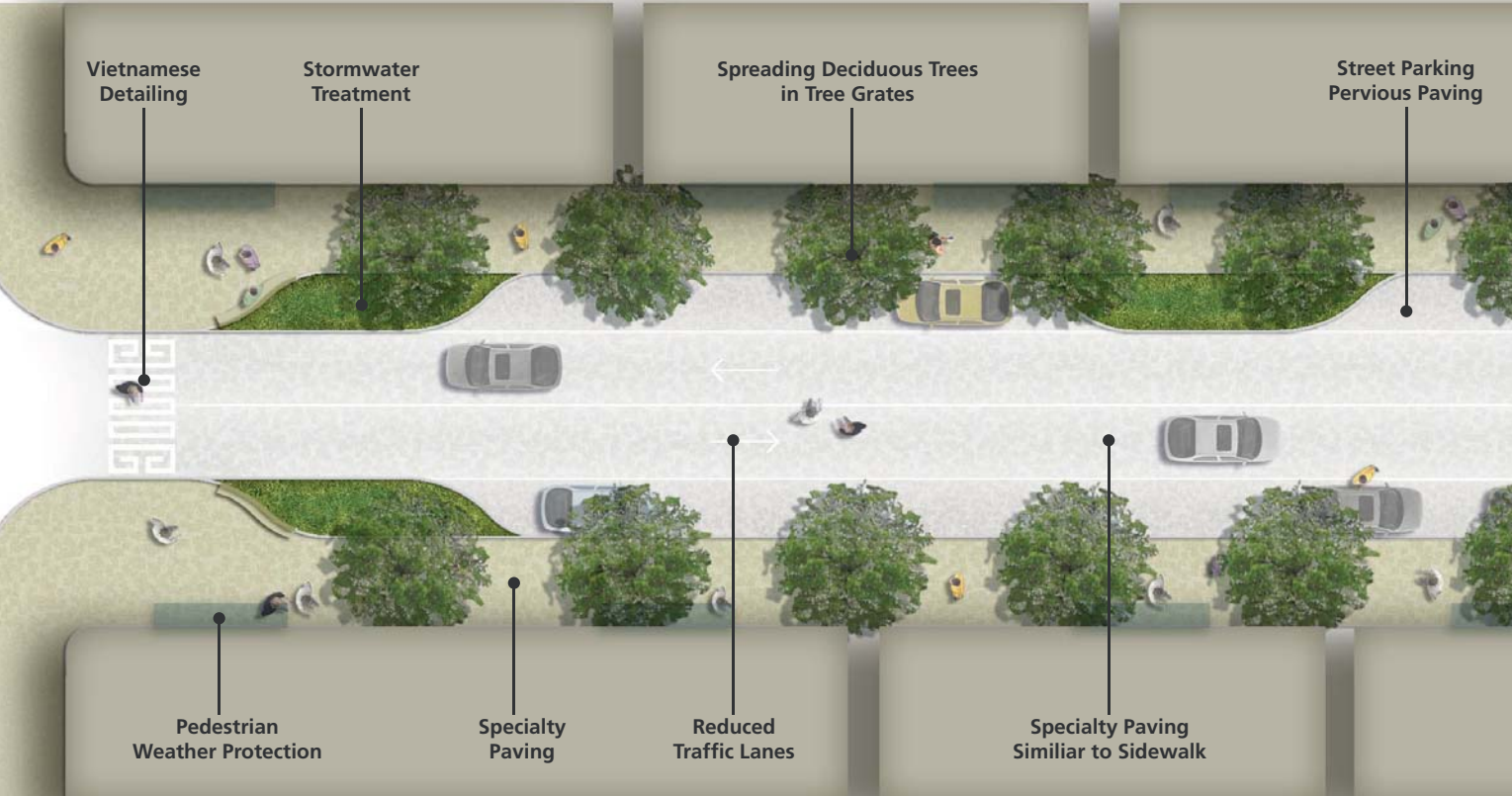


Maximize open space and enhance pedestrian circulation while creating a safe and welcoming place for local businesses to grow and thrive



LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

Excerpt from *Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report*
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008



Create a more pedestrian-friendly environment with integrated stormwater management and a focus on providing access to and space for local businesses.



DESIGN FEATURES

- Maximize streetscape for pedestrian use and high-quality open space
- Maintain pedestrian scale by putting focus on ground level
- Active and vibrant streetscape that supports a variety of uses
- Use landscape and built features to enhance and preserve the character of the Vietnamese culture
- Enhanced street functionality with areas for stormwater detention, cleansing and infiltration
- Pervious parking areas
- Special paving through both pedestrian and vehicular zones
- Roadway designed to keep speeds down and maintain low volumes

A textural paving pattern influenced by Vietnamese culture, art and architecture will help to provide a visual clue to incoming traffic that they are entering a pedestrian zone by encouraging a decrease in speed and overall awareness. The street and the pedestrian zone should have a unified paving scheme. This increases the sense of a shared space where people are allowed to move about the street in the same manner as that of Pike Place Market or Westlake Center today.

Storm water cleansing and infiltration would be supported through a series of planters that in turn act as traffic calming devices. Planters could be placed at the entrance to each block so that by pinching the street they encourage vehicles to slow down while at the same time providing a safe place for pedestrians to cross near the intersections. The street would contain only one lane of traffic in either direction with parking lanes on both sides of the street. Pervious paving options should be considered in the parking lanes.

The storm water planters would be designed so that the shape and operation is both artistic and functional while taking into consideration the cultural significance of the surrounding neighborhood. The planters would be filled with plants that are suitable for wet conditions and water filtration in the Seattle area. The planters would take advantage of topography and the natural flow of the stormwater by designing a series of planters to work as a system.

LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

*Excerpt from Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008*

In the long-term vision for Little Saigon, pedestrian cross-block connections have been proposed between east-west vehicular streets, to allow for easier north-south pedestrian movement. These public open space corridors will offer many benefits to Little Saigon residents as well as surround neighborhoods who wish to access the area by foot. In addition to 2 more intensive connections between Jackson/King and King/Weller where open space and commercial will combine to create a bustling urban destination in itself, other more traditional green corridors will function primarily as connections from street to street.



Enhances the north-south pedestrian movement through the district while strengthening the connection with local businesses



LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

Excerpt from *Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report*
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008



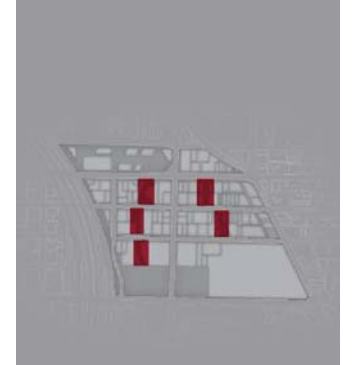
Create a more pedestrian-friendly environment with integrated stormwater management and a focus on providing access to and space for local businesses.

Benefits

- Added public open space
- Mixed-use development with small business space at ground level and residences above
- A more pedestrian friendly neighborhood environment
- Walking routes connecting neighborhood with surrounding developments (Yesler Terrace, Dearborn Goodwill Development)
- Intensive Connections (Jackson to King, King to Weller)
 - Lively pedestrian connection between proposed Market Plaza and Transit Hub to King Street pedestrian core
 - Cafes, restaurants, shops with residential above will create a vibrant human-scale atmosphere
 - A flowing water axis fed by captured stormwater in each cross-block connection will add interest and movement to compliment pedestrian activity.

DESIGN FEATURES

- Additional public open space
- Enhance walkability of the district through safe and easy walking routes
- Integrated stormwater flowing through with the pedestrian movement and connecting the streets
- Cafes, restaurants, shops with residential above to create a vibrant human-scale atmosphere
- Directions connections with pedestrian nodes and plazas within the blocks
- Where the pedestrian areas hit the vehicular zone, a shared space is created making crossing the street safe and easy by giving the pedestrian priority



LITTLE SAIGON PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

Excerpt from *Little Saigon Public Realm Design Report*
by Atelier Dreiseitl, August 2008

ACTION PLAN

- Continue development of urban nodes
- Develop additional open spaces and street improvements along edges of district to create stronger connections with surrounding communities
- Design and develop terraced community garden with integrated stormwater management on north side of S. Dearborn Street
- Design and develop stormwater management connection under S. Dearborn Street
- Design and develop stormwater retention area on south side of S. Dearborn Street

